

Driver agency offers to pay £5,000 HGV training and apprenticeships available

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Future lorry drivers are being offered £5,000 HGV training for free in a bid to tackle a 'perfect storm' of driver shortages.

John Poliquin, Director of Pertemps Driving Academy, part of the Warwickshire-based Pertemps Network Group of recruitment specialists, said that the loss of European drivers through [Brexit](#), postponed Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) testing, also known as Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) and changes to regulations has resulted in a shortfall of as many as 90,000 in drivers in the UK.

And with food shortages already being reported by supermarkets, McDonalds and Nandos, the situation will only get worse as the industry gears up for Christmas.

Mr Poliquin said: "It's as if someone has come along with a massive hoover and sucked up all of the staff into the bag. They've just all gone.

"I've had it in the past where we have had no jobs and too many people and now it's the other way round. I have honestly never known anything like it."

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“Hauliers are already struggling to get their products moved and as the festive period approaches, as people start to buy more, that will put an an even greater strain on logistics.”

Free training

Pertemps Driving Academy is offering free licence acquisition training at sites in Worcestershire, Yorkshire and, soon, Bristol, as it seeks to fill massive shortfalls in this sector.

The academy has had interest from 1,200 would-be drivers who are vetted before being considered for the course.

Pertemps is stumping up the cost itself in return for drivers signing up for a two-year contract to work for the agency.



John Poliquin, Director of Pertemps Driving Academy, part of the Warwickshire-based Pertemps Network Group of recruitment specialists

Mr Polyquin said: “We felt we needed to do something to try and get things moving and attract the next generation of drivers. One of the biggest barriers is the cost, which is why we are offering to cover that £5,000 in fees

“Another barrier is that there is a lot of organising to do in terms of appointments, medicals, and assessments, for instance. This needs to be coordinated and booked. We will do all that for our candidates also. We will take that pain away so they can focus on the driving.”

The drivers could then go on to support any number of Pertemps high-profile logistics clients across the UK, with driving roles gateways into long careers in logistics, including opportunities for rail, sea and air freight also.

“We felt it was right to be proactive for the good of the

whole economy and putting people first, as well as introducing new blood into the exciting arena of logistics. This type of driving role is very different from how it may have been a few years ago and can attract applicants from diverse backgrounds.”

He said that the industry has had a bad press and suffered because it had not been introduced as a career pathway in schools and colleges.

Mr Polyquin said there are discussions underway about shorter shifts to attract a more diverse set of candidates.

He said: “We want to attract mums and dads who cannot commit to 12 hours driving that they can do a six hour shift instead.

“The problem is that nobody is talking about logistics but the fact is it’s a very professional job and our drivers take pride in what they do and the new modern vehicles are beautiful inside.

“These drivers are the lifeblood of Great Britain,” he said.

Where else can I get training?

The Government is offering to pay up to £7,000 for logistics businesses to take on new staff under its Large goods vehicle (LGV) driver C and E (level 2) Apprenticeship scheme.

The scheme takes around 13 months.

There are hundreds of businesses offering the course listed on the Government website with [a tool to search for apprenticeships in your area](#).

Who else is offering free training?

Last month we wrote about [Leicestershire-based Translink Express Logistics](#) investing tens of thousands of pounds in free training courses to help get more drivers on the roads.

The business, based in the village of Narborough, a couple of miles from junction 21 of the M1, says its scheme to offer fully-funded driver training to new and existing employees is the first of its kind, and will provide a simpler route into work for younger and new-pass drivers.

Translink, which is a member of the Wolverhampton-based Pallet-Track network, is offering free HGV training courses to its staff from this month (July) up to a value of £2,500 per person.

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